



Should people of Appalachia be more concerned with jobs or with the impact that industries have? It depends on who you ask.



Go Tell the Children by Muriel Miller Dressler

Go tell the children the mountain is trembling,
An earth-moving monster is eating its way
Through grapevines and shumate and wild laurel thickets
And even Sweet William has fallen prey.

Go tell the children their true love is dying,
The whippoorwill's song no more shall they know;
Go tell the children to bow down in sorrow;
The fullness of mountains--of mountains must go!

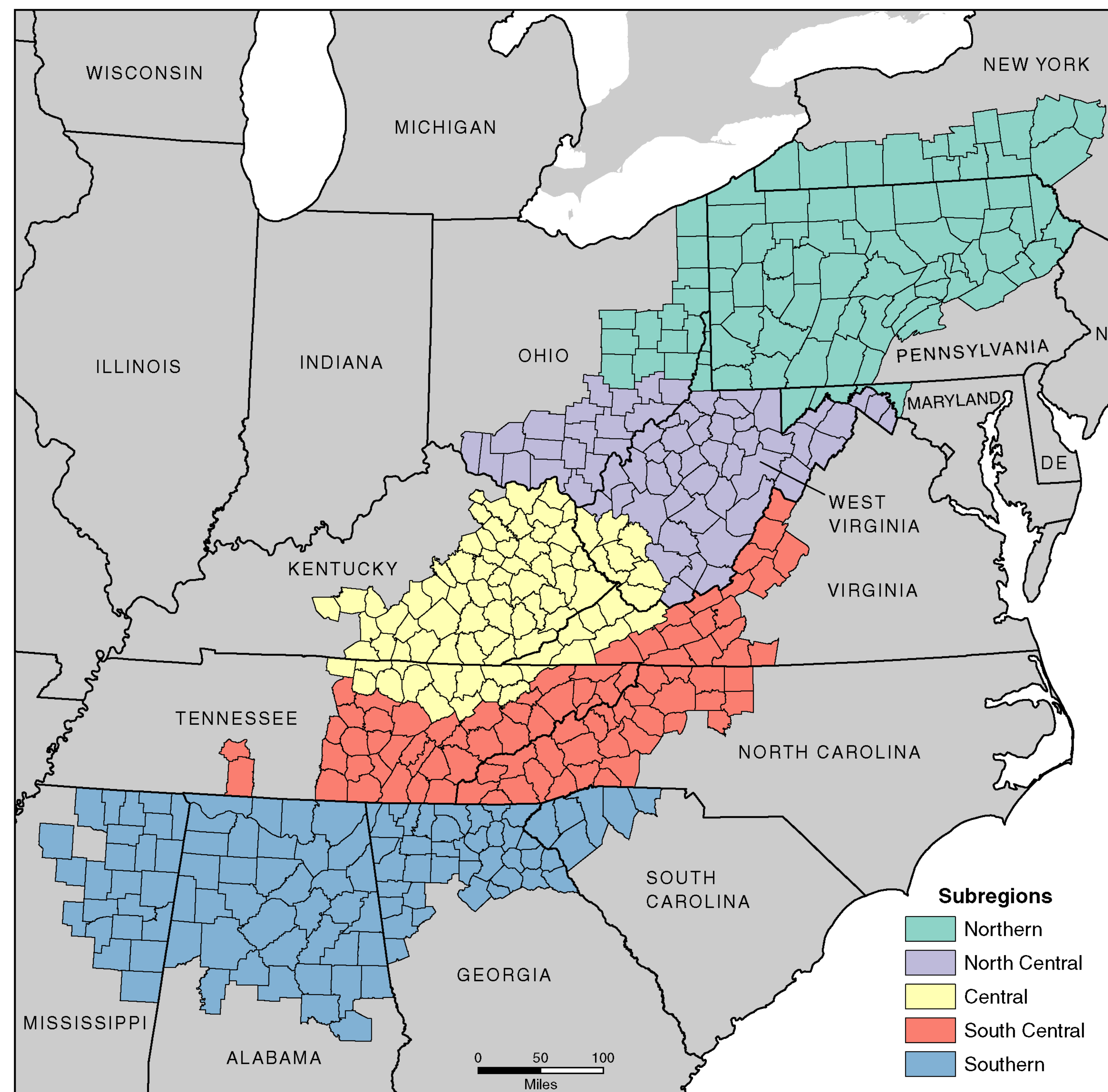
...The flowers of the fringe tree are blacker than midnight,
The blue fruit now lies on the crust of dead earth;
No more shall white flowers hang down like fringes;
O, Go tell the children I weep at their birth!

Go tell the children that trailing arbutus
Lies in cold ashes of campfires once red,
That popetern and spicebush now yield to the slaughter;
O, Go tell the children the mountain is dead!

Appa-latch-uh

A Story of Complexity

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Map by: Appalachian Regional Commission, November 2009.

English historian Arnold Toynbee (1935) who allegedly never spent any time in Appalachia but wrote an account anyway:

"The Appalachian mountain people at this day are no better than barbarians...the Appalachians present the ; melancholy spectacle of a people who have acquired civilization and then lost it."

Our academic explorations have led us to discover that "there are ... many different Appalachias [and] the things that hold all of this together are that it is all Appalachia and it is all treated as the Other in a culture that increasingly places value on Sameness." Appalachia's insistence on being itself creates a complex culture and region difficult to understand from an outside perspective.

Challenges like care for the environment, creation of jobs, negotiating progress, and the wealth and beauty of tradition become enmeshed in a web of complexity that beckons--not for a simple fix--but for engagement, understanding, and exploration.



Transition by Bernard Stallard

Old ways of life are going from our hills,
It saddens most of us to see them go,
But then, a newer destiny fulfills
A promise, brighter than the life we know...
We watch and listen while the change occurs.
It makes us sad to see the old ways out,
But then there also goes a poverty
And ignorance we do so well to rout
We keep the better art, it seems to me.
These ancient hills rise high, forever strong,
To foster finer life and sweeter song.